

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 33-48 are pending. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 33. By this amendment, claim 33 is amended to place it in independent form. Claims 24-30 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 34-48 are added. Claims 33, 34, 39, and 44 are independent claims. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 34-48 are now in condition for allowance. A notice indicating the same is respectfully requested.

II. Withdrawn Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In numbered paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action dated January 12, 2006, the Examiner notes that the anticipation rejection of claims 24-30 is withdrawn. Applicant thanks the Examiner for reconsideration of the prior rejection in view of the Remarks submitted October 28, 2005. Nevertheless, claims 24-30 are hereby cancelled.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In numbered paragraphs 2-3 on pages 2-3 of the Office Action, claims 24-30 are rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,079,579 to De Cuyper. Claim 33 is not rejected. By this Amendment, claims 24-30 are cancelled, thus rendering the rejection moot. Claims 34-48 are added and are believed to distinguish over De Cuyper for at least the following reasons.

As noted in the instant disclosure, an important aspect of the instant invention is to provide an effective and economical method of securing an attachment object to a hollow plastic preform, and thus ultimately to a blow molded container formed therefrom. Page 1, lines 11-17 of the disclosure states:

[a]ttachment objects, such as handles, may be secured to the preform or the container by molding the attachment object

integrally with the preform or a portion of the preform, or by placing a separately formed attachment object in the blow mold in such a way that the attachment object is secured to the container body during blow molding.

That is, the preform and the attachment object are adapted to be received in a blow mold together and blow molded into a container having the attachment object thereon. Furthermore, claim 33 and new independent claims 34, 39, and 44 expressly recite that the “attachment object” is at least one of a handle, a label attachment, and a jacket surrounding a body portion of the preform.

De Cuyper, on the other hand, shows and discloses a preform 2 adapted for being subjected to blow molding into a container (*see, e.g.*, FIGS. 4-6; abstract; column 4, line 39). The preform 2 of De Cuyper includes an integral pouring spout 20 to reduce post-pour drip from the preform 2 (column 1, lines 33-68) and is additionally “provided with a *cap* 10 which *serves as a closure* for the liquid to be contained and as a security ring” (column 2, lines 29-31) (emphasis added). The Office Action refers to cap 10 of De Cuyper as an attachment object and, in turn, interprets the combination of preform 2 and cap 10 as being a “preform assembly” (Office Action, page 3, lines 3-12).

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant again respectfully submits that the cap 10 of De Cuyper is not “a handle,” “a label attachment,” or “a jacket surrounding a body portion of the preform” as required by claims 33, 34, 39, and 44. The Applicant further maintains that although De Cuyper discloses that the cap 10 may be attached to preform 2, he fails to teach or suggest a preform assembly, including a preform and an attachment object, configured to be received in a blow mold and blow molded into a container, as recited in each of the independent claims. Claims 35-38, 40-43, and 45-48 depend from at least one of claims 34, 39, and 44 and are submitted as being allowable for at least the same reasons.

IV. Conclusion

Claims 33-48 are pending in the application. The Applicant respectfully submits that claims 33-48 are in condition for allowance and requests issuance of a Notice of Allowability indicating the same.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that a personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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